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**James Monroe to Thomas Jefferson, December 1823,
Dated Received December 11, from Thomas Jefferson
and James Monroe Correspondence, Transcribed
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James Monroe to Thomas Jefferson

Washington Decr[ante 11] 1823.

Dear Sir

Shortly after the receipt of yours of the 24th of October, & while the subject treated in it, was under consideration the Russian minister drew the attntion of the govt. to the same subject, tho' in a very different sense from that in which it had been done by Mr. Canning. Baron Tuyll announced in an official letter, and it was understood by order of the Emperor that having heard that the republic of Columbia had appointed a minister to Russia, he wishd it to be distinctly understood that he wuld not receive him nor would he receive any minister from any of the new govts de facto of which the new world had been recently the theatre. On another occasion he observ'd that the Emperor had seen with great satisfaction the declaration of this govt. when the new govts. were recognized. That it was the intention of the UStates to remain neutral. He gave this intimation for the purpose of expressing the wish of his master, that we would preserve in the same policy. He communicated soon afterwards an extract of a letter from his govt. in which the

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conduct of the allied powers in regard to Naples, Spain, & Portugal was reviewed and their policy explain'd distinctly

avowing their determination to crush all revolutionary movements & thereby to preserve order in the civilized world. The terms "civilized world" were probably intended to be applied to Europe only, but admitted an application to this hemisphere also. These communications were recieved as proofs of candour, & a friendly disposition to the UStates, but were nevertheless answer'd in a manner equally explicit, frank, & direct, to each point. In regard to neutrality it was observ'd then that sentimt. was declar'd, that the other powers of Europe had not taken side with Spain-that they were then neutral. If they should change their policy, the state of things on which our neutrality was declar'd, being alterd, we would not be bound by that declaration, but might change our policy also. Informal notes, or rather a proces of verbal of what passed in conference to such effect, were exchangd, between Mr. Adams & the Russian mingier with an understanding however that they should be held confidential.

When the character of these communications & that from Mr. Canning, & that from the Russian minister is considerd, & the time when made, it leaves little doubt that some project against the new govts. is contemplated. In what form is uncertain. It is hoped that the sentiments expressd in the message, will give a check to it. We certainly meet in full extent the proposition of Mr. Canning, & in the mode to give it the greatest effect. If his govt. makes a similar decln. the project will, it may be presumed, be abandoned. By taking step here, it is done in a manner more conciliatory with, & respectful to Russia, & the other powers, than is taken in England, and as it is thought with more credit to our govt. Had we mov'd in the first instance in England, seperated as she is in part from those powers, our union with her, being masked, might have producd

irritation with them. We know that Russian dreads a connection between the UStates & G. Britain

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or harmony in policy. Moving on our own ground, the apprehension that unless she retreats, that effect may be produced may be a motive with her for retreating: Had we mov'd in England, it is probable that it would have been inferrd that we acted under her influence, & at her instigation, & thus have lost credit as well with our southern neighbours, as with the allied powers.

There is some danger that the British govt. when it sees the part we have taken, may endeavour to throw the whole burden on us, and profit, in case of such interposition of the allied powers, of her neutrality, at our expense. But I think that this would be impossible after what has passd on the subject; besides it does not follow from what has been said, that we should be bound to ingage in the war, in such event. Of this intimations may be given should it be necessary. A messenger will depart for Engld with despatches for Mr. Rush in a few days who will go on to St. Petersbg. With others to Mr. Middleton. And considering the crisis, it has occur'd that a special mission of the first consideration from the country directd to Engld. in the first instance with power to attend any Congress, that may be conven'd on the affrs. of So. Am. or Mexico might have the happiest effect. You shall hear from me further on this subject.

Very sincerely your friend.

RC (Jefferson Papers, Library of Congress).